

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following claims replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1 (currently amended). A forming machine (1) for producing articles (2) of sheet material from flat blanks (2a); the machine (1) comprising:

a powered conveying means (4) for feeding an orderly succession of flat blanks (2a) along a forming path (K), and

pressure means (15) for holding said blanks (2a) on the ~~said~~ conveying means (4);

and being characterized in that said conveying means comprise a roller conveyor (4) comprising:

a number of intermediate rollers (6) aligned transversely to their respective axes of rotation in a plane parallel to said forming path (K),

two lateral shoulders (5), ~~a number of intermediate rollers (6), each connected to the shoulders (5) to rotate about a respective axis (6a), and~~

a synchronous drive means (7);

said intermediate rollers (6) each being connected perpendicularly between said shoulders (5) and each being connected to said synchronous drive means (7) for rotating each of said rollers (6) about its axis (6a);

said axes (6a) of said rollers (6) being equally spaced with a first spacing (P);

said pressure means (15) being fitted to supporting means (18) comprising a

supporting frame (19), and a locating and retaining means (~~24, 28~~) associated with said shoulders (5) to locate and lock ~~the~~ a supporting frame (19) along the forming path (K) in a number of fixed relative reference positions with respect to the shoulders (5).

2 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 1, characterized by also comprising folding means (52) (53) for folding at least one portion (61) (64) of said blanks (2a); said folding means (52) (53) being carried by respective supporting means (18) identical with the supporting means of said pressure means (15).

3 (currently amended). A machine as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that said pressure means (15) comprise at least two revolving bodies rotating about respective parallel axes (15a); ~~the axes (6a) of said rollers (6) being equally spaced with a first spacing (P), and the~~ said parallel axes (15a) of said revolving bodies being equally spaced with a second spacing (P1) equal to said first spacing (P).

4 (currently amended). A machine as claimed in Claim 3, characterized in that ~~the~~ a vertical projection of each of said axes (15a) of said revolving bodies coincides with the axis (6a) of a corresponding one of said ~~roller~~ rollers (6).

5 (currently amended). A machine as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that said locating and retaining means (~~24, 28~~) comprise, for each said shoulder (5), a row

of retaining seats (24) spaced along said shoulder (5); ~~the said retaining seats (24)~~
being selectively engaged by a locating projection (30); ~~carried by said frame (19); and~~
said locating projection (30) comprising a positioning shaft of a releasable fat-fit gripping
means (29, 31) ~~being interposed between~~ passing through said shoulder (5) and said
supporting frame (19); and said releasable fat-fit gripping means being selectively
employable to engage said shoulder and said supporting frame in a fixed position.

6 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 5, characterized in that each said retaining seat (24) is symmetrical with respect to a vertical plane (A) containing said axes (6a) (15a).

7 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 6, characterized in that each said shoulder (5) comprises a respective plate portion (5a); each said retaining seat (24) being defined by a slot formed through said plate portion (5a).

8 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 7, characterized in that each said slot (24) forms part of a respective keyhole-shaped opening (26).

9 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 5, characterized in that said fast-fit gripping means (29, 31) comprise, for each said frame (19), at least one respective threaded tie (29) carried by the frame (19); the tie comprising a shank (30) which

engages said retaining seat (24), and a head (30a) resting on the shoulder (5); a nut (31) being screwed to the shank (30) to grip the frame (19) and a portion of said shoulder (5) together.

10 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that said pressure means (15) and said folding means (52) (53) are fitted to respective said frames (19) by a respective first (36) and at least one respective second guide and slide assembly (37) to move independently of one another in two respective directions (36a) (37a) perpendicular to each other, and one of which is parallel to the axes (6a) of said rollers (6); locking means (43) (49) being associated with each guide and slide assembly to lock said pressure means (15) and said folding means (52) (53) releasably at any points over said roller conveyor (4).

11 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 10, characterized in that each said second guide and slide assembly (37) comprises a slide defined by a beam (48) from which the relative pressure means (15) /folding means (52) (53) hang.

12 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 11, characterized in that respective adjustable fastening means (51) are interposed between said beam (48) and said pressure means (15) /folding means (52) (53).

13 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 10, characterized in that the slide of each said first guide and slide assembly comprises a C-shaped fastening jaw (38) which fits laterally to a cross member (21) of the relative said frame (19); screw locking means (43) being interposed between the fastening jaw (38) and said cross member (21).

14 (currently amended). A machine as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that each said frame (19) is a gantry-type frame, and comprises two uprights (20) connected to said shoulders (5), a cross member (21) separate from said uprights (20), and fast-fit connecting means ~~(34, 34a)~~ interposed between said cross member (21) and said uprights (20); said fast-fit connecting means ~~(34, 34a)~~ comprising retaining means ~~(34)~~, and elastic means (34a) acting in opposition to said retaining means ~~(34)~~ to move the cross member (21) away from the uprights (20) and from the roller conveyor (4).

15 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 14, characterized in that said retaining means comprise a toggle locking device (34).

16 (currently amended). A machine as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that said synchronous drive means comprise a chain (9) powered by a single electric motor (8); and, for each of said intermediate rollers (6), a toothed wheel (11) fitted to ~~the~~ said intermediate roller (6) and meshing with said chain (9).

17 (original). A machine as claimed in Claim 1, characterized by comprising a single angular position transducer (65) connected to one of said rollers (6).